

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A swellable hydrogel-forming polymer comprising at least one hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure and at least one water-insoluble phosphate.

2. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure ~~is~~ comprises a polyester formed from a polyol and 2,2-dimethylolpropionic acid.

3. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure ~~is~~ comprises a polypropyleneimine, a polyamidoamine, or a polyesteramide.

4. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 3~~ wherein said water-insoluble phosphate ~~is~~ comprises a calcium phosphate.

5. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 4~~ further comprising a powdery ~~and/or dusty~~ additive, a dusty additive, or a mixture thereof.

6. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 5 wherein said additive ~~is~~ comprises a metal salt, a pyrogenic silica, a polysaccharide, a nonionic surfactant, a wax ~~and/or~~, diatomaceous earth,  
or mixtures thereof.

7. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 5 ~~or claim 6~~ wherein said additive is  
present in the form of hollow microspheres which are  
from 1 to 1000  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and whose wall thickness  
comprises from 1% to 10% of said diameter.

8. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 7~~ comprising less than  
50 weight ppm of particles less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter.

9. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 8~~ comprising less than  
50 weight ppm of particles less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter  
after exposure to a mechanical stress.

10. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 9~~ wherein not less than  
90% by weight of the particles ~~are~~ is between 150 and  
500  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and which is characterized by a CRC  
of not less than 25 g/g, an AUL or not less than 22  
g/g, and an SFC of not less than  $80 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

11. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 9~~ wherein not less than  
90% by weight of the particles ~~are~~ is between 100 and  
600  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and which is characterized by a CRC  
of not less than 25 g/g, an AUL of not less than 22  
g/g, and an SFC of not less than  $60 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

12. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 11 wherein not less than 95% by weight  
of the particles ~~are~~ is between 100 and 600  $\mu\text{m}$  in  
diameter.

13. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 11 ~~or 12~~ wherein not less than 99% by  
weight of the particles ~~are~~ is between 100 and 600  $\mu\text{m}$   
in diameter.

14. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of elaims~~ claim 1 ~~to 13~~ characterized by  
having a CRC of not less than 26 g/g and an AUL of not  
less than 23 g/g.

15. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of elaims~~ claim 1 ~~to 13~~ characterized by  
having a CRC of not less than 30 g/g and an AUL of not  
less than 25 g/g.

16. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of elaims~~ claim 1 ~~to 13~~ characterized by  
having an SFC of not less than  $80 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

17. (Currently amended) The polymer ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to any of elaims~~ claim 1 ~~to 15~~ characterized by  
having an SFC of not less than  $120 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

18. (Original) A process for preparing a swellable hydrogel-forming polymer, which comprises aftertreating a hydrogel with at least one hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure and with at least one water-insoluble phosphate.

19. (Currently amended) The process ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 18 wherein said aftertreating is  
~~carried out~~ performed together with a surface-post-  
crosslinking operation.

20. (Currently amended) The process ~~accord-~~  
~~ing to~~ of claim 19 wherein the surface-postcrosslinking  
operation is performed using a solvent which comprises  
~~at least one surface postcrosslinker is~~ a mixture of  
isopropanol and water and at least one surface post-  
crosslinker.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (New) A method of binding a water-insoluble phosphate on a swellable hydrogel-forming polymeric particle comprising admixing a hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure with the swellable hydrogel-forming polymeric particles and the water-insoluble phosphate.